

REMARKS

This is a Response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment mailed January 15, 2004. This Response includes a complete amended claim set including claim 13. Claim 13 has also been amended to improve its language without reducing the scope.

Claims 1-17, 19 and 20 are pending in the application. Claims 1-17 are allowed. Claim 18 is canceled.

Further examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Reg. No. 42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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